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ABSTRACT

This action research explored the relationship between community and learning. The essence of community was examined through informal conversations with Hawaiian parents, service providers, and students involved in advocating for family/community centers in the schools. Community was found to be inversely related to alienation and defined by experience more than structure. Specifically, the sense of community consists of the senses of connection, meaning, empowerment, oneness with others, and a sense of harmony with all. A review of brain theory found that the processes of community making and the processes of learning are basically the same. Human development theorists recognize a gradient of individual human development from self-preservation to community and harmony with all. In reconceptualizing community education, the most important criterion by which to judge programs is whether they have produced a more positive sense of community among the participants, which in turn leads to higher levels of human development. Five objectives of community education were identified. The fundamental role of the community educator is to be a model learner and model the essence of community in policies, programs, and practices. The model of community education resulting from this study was used in the development of parent-community networking centers currently operating in Hawaii. (Contains 35 references.) (TD)

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# Hawaii's Parent-Community Networking Experience: Discovering Community and Community Education

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## Preface

A dissertation is hard work and when it is completed, it becomes a cause for celebration and thanksgiving. I owe much to my husband, Gordon, family, media production partners, and church; the ʻOhana Project at Kamiloiki School from 1973 to 1980; the Hawaii Community Education Association (HCEA), the Center for Adult and Community Education Development; the State Advisory Council for Adult and Community Education, ʻAhā Kūkākūkā Conference networkers, and Parent-Community Networking Centers (PCNC). The people of all of these groups taught me aspects of community and myself every day. Their "talk stories" about the times when they sense value, acceptance, accomplishment, and oneness have touched me more deeply than one can imagine. They played key roles in the community education movement and this action research. Their roles are described in the complete dissertation.

This action research took place over a period of 15 or so years. It tells of my involvement in the realization of parent/community centers in the schools and of co-creating a conceptual framework upon which community education programs can be built. Each group mentioned above had a linkage in the community education movement, yet each has a history broader than my total experience of them and is an entity in and of itself. For example, although the ʻOhana Project and the PCNCs are at opposite ends of a time line regarding my experience in the community education movement, one did not evolve directly from the other. That is, The Parent-Community Networking Centers are not replicas of the ʻOhana Project. The ʻOhana Project was a successful model existing from 1973-1982 and was specifically used in the community education movement through the late 1970s and the '80s to help lobby for Parent-Community Networking Centers (1986) in the schools. The ʻOhana Project was the seed thought, the vision, a precursor to the PCNCs, but not the same. They both use part-time facilitators, are cost-effective, have the sense of community as a primary goal, and involve school, home, and neighborhood in education; however, they are different. The ʻOhana Project used communication models of the 1960s (Parent Effectiveness Training and Transactional Analysis) to develop relationships and the ʻOhana Dialogue Workshops

to resolve school/community issues. The PCNC is based on successful community education experiences as well as newly developed models generated from the successful experiences of PCNC. The PCNC uses 1) the relationship and team-building models developed by Ken Yamamoto, 2) the community education and nesting support network models which Ken and I coauthored and which are described in this paper, and 3) other models currently being drawn from PCNC experience. The same principle, that one group does not translate into the other, applies to the other groups as well. HCEA is not 'Ahā Kūkākūkā or PCNC and vice versa. Yet paradoxically, while ALL the groups are different, they have been and are ONE in the mission to create community wherever people are.

To the people with whom I experienced and saw the essence of community, from 1973 to 1991, A BIG MAHALO — Floria Abe, Joshua Agsalud, Herman Aizawa, John Aki, Ron Ching, Eileen Clarke, Jeanne Corbett, Aiko Eckerd, Mel Ezer, Yvonne Friel, Royal Fruehling, Marie Fujii, Gay George, Francis Hatanaka, Noboru Higa, Tom Higa, Vi Hiranaka, Donna Ikeda, Don and Linda Kaita, Mervlyn Kitashima, Victor Kobayashi, Stan Koki, Susan Kurihara, Bonnie Lake, Toni Leahey, Phil Mark, Henry Nagahara, Warren Nakano, Dean Neubauer, Andy Nii, Ted Nishijo, Jeanne Nishioka, Laurene Oride, Rose Ranne, Pat Royos, Meryl Suetsugu, Dexter Suzuki, Joyce Tanji, Charles Toguchi, Dick Walenta, Kathy Wilson, Art Wong -- and especially Ken Yamamoto, my field advisor, and Ralph Stueber, my dissertation committee chairperson. Much love and appreciation goes to Gordon, husband, counselor, and best friend, my children, Jeffrey, Alan, and Cheri, who gave so much to what became a family affair.

This paper is definitely not a final word on community. For me, it's a beginning. Thank you, Pacific Region Educational Laboratory, particularly Stan Koki, Mary Hammond, and Liane Sing for arranging to print and share this beginning.

# Hawaii's Parent-Community Networking Experience: Discovering Community and Community Education

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### Abstract

This is an action research study. The methodology included a case study, review of the contents of the Community Education Journal, and a critical analysis of the meaning of community. The result of the study was a guide for the development of community centers in schools and other programs and practices related to Community Education.

### Summary

This study began with a case study of the 'Ohana (Hawaiian for "family") Center and proceeded through an extensive examination of the meaning of community, a reconceptualization of Community Education, and a description of the current Parent-Community Networking Centers. The results of the study were used to construct a new Community Education model for the development of Parent-Community Networking Centers. The model includes a description of alienation and how that alienation can be overcome through the implementation of group, personal, and relationship development efforts which then lead into programs and activities, and outcomes and benefits of community/harmony.

## Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research was to (a) clarify the meaning of Community Education, (b) identify the essence of community, and (c) build upon that essence a Community Education model. The model would serve as a guide for the development of community centers in every school and a guide for the development of other programs and practices related to Community Education.

## Methodology: Action Research

Seymour B. Sarason, community psychologist, describes action research as social action, "a vehicle for learning and contributing to knowledge" (Sarason, 1976, p. 247).

> By social action . . . I refer to any instance in which an academic person takes on a socially responsible role—in government, politics, business, schools, or poverty agencies—which will allow him to experience the "natural" functioning of that particular aspect of society. The role must be an operational one with responsibility and some decision making powers. He becomes an insider. He is not a consultant . . . without responsibility for implementation. He is at bat. He is not sitting in the stands . . . passing judgment on the players. He is in the game and he is a player . . . He is there to "win," and winning is defined in terms of ideas and theories . . . contributing to new and general knowledge about man and society. (p. 247)

Action research starts with the lived-in context from which the research questions evolve. The researcher then weaves back and forth in web-like fashion making connections with the ever-changing lived-in situation, the literature, interviews of people, and creative reflection. Within the framework of action research, several methodologies were used in this study:

1. Documenting the researcher's first lived-in experience, the 'Ohana Center (1973-1978).

2. Analyzing the Community Education Journal regarding the various perceptions of Community Education during the 1970s.

3. Performing a critical analysis of the meaning of community after the first six Parent-Community Networking Centers (PCNC) were established in 1985.

4. Interpreting the essence of community as experience during the expansion years (1985-1991) of PCNC.

5. Synthesizing the inter-relationship of the processes of community, multiple brain systems, processes of learning, and stages of human development.

6. Reconceptualizing Community Education and the development of a Community Education model.

7. Describing the Parent-Community Networking Centers, a program from which the Community Education model evolved.

## Results and Conclusions

### The Catalytic Lived-In Situation, A Case Study

In the 1970s, the researcher experienced the transformation of a school/community from one in conflict to one of 'ohana (Hawaiian for "family"). Key to the transformation was the 'Ohana Center which the researcher had the privilege of founding with other parents. The 'Ohana Center sponsored an after-school program, a change in report cards, development of a new playground, development of an early childhood play group, family camps, parenting workshops, and a drop-in center for families, teachers, and students. So successful was this grassroots operated center, that the project was funded by the Legislature for three years with serious consideration of replication at other school sites.

Confusion surrounding the concept of Community Education became a major obstacle to the continued funding of the program. Policy-makers could not see the direct impact Community Education could have upon student learning.

### What Is Community Education?

As a former teacher and now a parent advocating for a sense of community in the schools, the researcher went back to college soon after the fading of the 'Ohana Project. Attendance at college was to clarify the meaning of Community Education and perhaps contribute to it.

Three mainstream perspectives of Community Education were identified from an analysis of the contents of the Community Education Journal, as:

1. Delivery of educational programs for people of all ages.

2. Process of resolving social problems through interagency collaboration and problem-solving groups.

3. An evolving philosophy of education. Community Education had not made an impact upon the children and youth attending our K-12 schools because it had yet to make the connection between community, learning, and human development.

The analysis of the contents of the Community Education Journal seemed to indicate that Community Education fell short as a distinct social and educational philosophy because it has yet to identify its essence—to sort out what community is, what the processes of community are, and what significance community has for learning and human development. Only when this is accomplished can Community Education unify the different perspectives of those who had a claim on Community Education—adult and community school directors, social activists, educators and human developmentalists. A better answer to the question, "What

is Community Education?" is dependent upon the answer to a more fundamental question, "What is community?"

## What Is Community?

To answer this question, selected literature was explored to determine the principal dimensions or perspectives by which the concept of community is understood. Underlying classical and twentieth century meanings of community were some key concepts of community as experience, structure, the value in context of an ideology, and as a prior stage to the development of society.

As experience, community refers to the feelings and thoughts associated with a sense of belonging and connection. As structure, community is often conceptualized as a place where people interact on a face-to-face basis such as a small town, neighborhood, or village.

Community as place is given value. It is judged positive or negative depending upon the writer's attitudes or beliefs regarding the new social order such as the new democratic order in the 18th century, and the growth of cities and modernity in the 19th and 20th centuries. From the perspective of societal development, community as place is conceptualized as the pole opposite of mass society, a precursor to society, and a stage in the development of society.

Work done by historians and sociologists reveals that community is more experience than place. Thomas Bender (1978), historian, did a historical study of community and social change in America. He concludes:

> It is clear from the many layers of emotional meaning attached to the word that the concept means more than a place or local activity. There is the expectation of a special quality of human relationship in a community, and it is this experiential dimension that is crucial to its definition. Community, then, can be defined better as an experience than as a place. (p. 6)

In this light, community and alienation are names for two different types of experiences which exist whenever human beings attempt to relate with each other. People form close ties with each other within and beyond the structures of home and village through travel, media, telephone, computers, fax machines, cable TV, work structures, and patterns of making a living.

If this is so, community as experience does not translate into village any more than alienation into society. Neither is community a definitive point in a deterministic developmental social change schema. Gemeinschaft does not necessarily develop into Gesellschaft.

Proximal distance is not a priori for community (Wellman, 1983, p. 247). The paradox is that the concept of community must be liberated from the family and neighborhood, so that the experience of community can be facilitated within the constraints of the family and neighborhood, outside of them, and transcending them.

## Community As Experience

In 1983, the researcher helped create a statewide network of grassroots persons advocating for family/community centers in the schools. In 1985, the Hawaii State Department of Education established six Parent-Community Networking Centers (PCNC). The researcher was assigned to the project as a graduate student.

PCNCs were drop-in centers located on school campuses having a mission of developing a sense of community among home, school, and neighborhood. Each center is facilitated by a part-time facilitator who does not necessarily have formal credentials.

Several questions evolved as a result of the Center development effort. What is the essence of community as experience? What experience(s) makes community what it is, without which, it could not be? What are the community-making processes? The answers to these questions would form the foundation for the development of PCNC.

To investigate and understand community as experience is to "talk story" (a common expression used by local people of Hawaii to refer to informal conversation) with people about their feelings and thoughts regarding the sense of community. Further, the researcher would observe people naturally creating community, to reflect upon the researcher's own experiences, and to make some sense of the recurring patterns.

Because story "rings true to human life" and because story seems to be built into the cultural frameworks of Hawaii's people throughout its history of oral traditions, "talking story" is a viable method to investigate community as experience. The method of "investigating a phenomenon by talking story" includes: (a) listening to people relate their experience of community from the time they feel alienation to the time they sense "community," (b) documenting the stories, (c) decoding them with the intent of generating basic themes, patterns, and generalizations, and (d) "re-presenting" them to the people, not as a lecture, but as an interactive process of discovering whether the themes truly reflect their natural experiences of community.

The people with whom the researcher "talked story" include parents, service providers, and students during the first developmental phases of the PCNC. They represent a variety of ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds and ages. Here are some of the shorter stories.

### Abe: Smiles Invite Feelings of Community

At first the teachers didn't know who I was. Nobody smiled. But everyday I would walk by and say, "Good morning." And I would smile and ask how I could help out. For one whole year, I smiled. Finally, the teachers accepted me. Today we have good feelings with each other. They're calling upon me every day. I feel part of them and they feel part of me. Now the entire faculty calls me "Uncle." (Mahelona, 1990)

**Gilbert: Kevin and Me**

When I took this job, nobody told me that the teachers would send me their worst kids! Anyway . . . this kid was really angry, so angry he wanted to kill somebody. And I knew he had a knife. I know how to talk with kids as a policeman because that's what I was before I took on this job. But how to talk with kids as a Facilitator of community was something really new to me!

I began talking with him. Everyday he saw me and everyday we had a chat. Then he began calling me "Uncle." I don't know what's going to happen to this kid. But at least we connected with each other. He knows he can come and talk with me. He knows that I love him in my own way. I accept him and he accepts me. We have an understanding of each other. (Elarinoff, 1990)

**Mervlyn: Empowered to Read**

We had just finished a wonderful workshop on parenting and the parents were completing the evaluation form. Then I noticed one parent who looked so uncomfortable. Tears welled in her eyes and she asked to talk with me later. When everyone left, she said in a very quiet voice, "I couldn't finish this because I don't know how to read." I was in awe of her. I admired her for coming to our workshop and for her love and concern for her child and told her so. Then I thought about the literacy program the adult schools were offering. I talked with her about it and today she's being tutored. She says she's found a forever friend that day. I think that's what community is all about—being a friend and helping each other. (Kitashima, 1990)

One way to begin to make sense of their stories of community is to identify their themes. The promise of themes is that they say something significant about a phenomenon.

**The Theme of Alienation**

The most obvious theme is the relationship between the sense of alienation and the sense of community. Community usually conjures "visions of togetherness and cooperation uncluttered by conflict, controversy, and divisiveness" (Sarason, 1976, p. 11). Actually, such visions are illusionary.

Community, according to our storytellers, is not without some previous experience of some tension, conflict, or alienation. Abe felt his smiles were not accepted. Kevin was separated from others. Mary wanted to do well but felt embarrassed because she could not read. Seymour Sarason (1976) notes:

> One has to be inordinately dense or illiterate (or both) to remain unaware of the centrality of this theme in various literary forms (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, plays), films, journals, newspapers, Sunday sermons, and political campaign speeches about binding up the wounds in the community. And if one's

work involves him with the personal problems of troubled people, the themes of unwanted destructive loneliness and social isolation are unmistakable (and monotonously repetitive). (p. 3)

Without alienation there can be no story of community; without community there is no story of alienation. Each defines the other.

## The Theme of Connection

To lack a sense of community is to feel disconnected from the self, work, play, surroundings, things, or other persons in the here and now. To connect with the other is to attend to the other. In his role as a new Community Facilitator, Abe felt separated from the teachers. He wanted to connect with them and therefore directed a friendly smile to each teacher every day. In Kevin and Me, a very angry young man was sent (connected, albeit involuntarily) to Gilbert. Mary in Mervlyn's story, Empowered to Read, needed to complete a workshop evaluation form and brought her need to the attention of Mervlyn, the Parent Facilitator.

The theme of connection runs through each story of community. Without connection there is no possibility of community. Connection is the entry point to yet another sense of community—the sense of meaning and acceptance.

## The Theme of Meaning and Acceptance

Not to sense community is to feel rejected, devalued, or "put down." To have a sense of community is to feel and to perceive that one is accepted and valued with all one's beliefs, attitudes, values/meanings intact.

**Abe: Smiling into Community**

Everyday I smiled. . . . Finally the teachers accepted me. . . . I feel part of them and they feel part of me. Now the whole school calls me "Uncle."

**Gilbert: He Calls Me "Uncle"**

He knows he can come and talk with me. I accept him and he accepts me.

**Mervlyn: Empowered to Read**

Then I noticed one parent. . . . Tears welled in her eyes. . . . I stood in awe of her. I admired her for coming to our workshop and for her love and concern for her child.

To accept is to listen and to surrender the need to control, judge, or to manipulate another's life. To accept is to be empathetic with the meanings expressed by the other as what is.

According to Jacquelyn Small (1989), author of Becoming Naturally Therapeutic, a natural therapist

> feels okay for his client to be who he is, and is willing to be there to offer assistance if he wishes to open and become free of limitations. In other words, a transformer is just naturally non-judgmental! And once a person feels this self-acceptance transferred from his counselor to himself, he is free to move on to the next level (more integration, more loving). Until this "miracle of self-love" happens, we are stuck right where we are. (p. 33)

## The Theme of Empowerment

In all of the stories regarding community, the two themes of connection and acceptance/meaning are present. However, in some of the stories the theme of empowerment or mastery is claimed. Bradley, age 9, expresses the promise of attaining the first two senses of community this way:

| | |
|---|---|
| If you touch me soft and gentle | [connection] |
| If you look at me and smile at me | [connection] |
| If you listen to me talk | [acceptance] |
| sometimes before you talk | [acceptance] |
| I will grow, really grow. | [empowerment] |

(James & Jongeward, 1971, p. 41)

"To grow, really grow" means to gain competence and power in the process of dealing with one's self and others in a problematic situation. In the natural order of community-making processes, empowerment does not seem to occur without the first steps of connection and acceptance.

## The Themes of Oneness with Others and Harmony with All

There are yet two other themes of community: oneness with others and harmony with the universe.

## Oneness with Others

> Suddenly it all came together! The costumes, the lights, the parents, the teachers, the volunteers, the cameras, the guests, the refreshments, the news media and the CHILDREN! Teachers gave the cues. Parents sat tall and proud. Dignitaries listened attentively and the magic of song, dance, and play began. By the time The Wizard of Oz was over, there was not a dry eye in the crowded cafeteria of this tiny rural school! I sensed the pride and joy of this school/community which was once on the low end of the achievement scale. I was ecstatic! I felt like I was everybody. We did it—all of us! (Royos, 1990)

## Harmony with All

> "Ua mau ke ea o ka aina i ka pono," the life of the land is preserved in righteousness. Kamehameha III spoke these words and they ring true to me today. I feel oneness with the aina. Aina is sacred. Aina is real—it lives and breathes. Aina is life—it is all of us—preserved in righteousness. (Kupuna, personal communication, November 5, 1991)

These last two senses of community defy logical description. Not only does the person in the first story feel part of a system, the person senses that the group is part of the person. Furthermore the group has evolved the person.

The same holds true in the second story. The person is part of the land; the land is part of the person. Furthermore the land has evolved the person. There is harmony in one's self, with others, and with the universe. Oneness with others and harmony with all is a way of simultaneously identifying one's self apart from the world, being interdependent with it, and being the world.

## Making Sense of Alienation/Community

The stories indicate that there isn't one sense of community, but several of them: connection, meaning, empowerment, oneness, and harmony—see Table 1. When the classical themes of alienation and community, sans ideology and propinquity, are organized by the natural order of community-making processes, conceptual linkages become evident.

The story tellers indicate that the senses of community are sequentially and cumulatively experienced. Basic to any level of community is the experience of connection. After connection, there is the possibility of being accepted and valued or of being rejected and devalued. If one achieves connection, if one feels that one is valued and is accepted, one has a choice of either opening or closing oneself to learning and empowerment.

Beyond empowerment there are again two choices. A person can become arrogant in the mastery of a problematic situation, or can experience that integrated sense of appreciation that one is part of something much larger than self (oneness).

**Table 1**
**The Senses of Community**

| The Senses of Alienation | The Processes of Community | The Senses of Community |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Isolation | Connect | Connection |
| 2. Meaninglessness | Accept | Meaning |
| 3. Powerlessness | Empower | Empowerment |
| 4. Fragmentation | Integrate | Oneness |
| 5. Anomie | Unify | Harmony |

If one chooses to be at awe at the way the system works, one is that much closer to that sense of community called harmony of all. To be in unity with the universe is to be in harmony with the natural laws of the universe. To be in unity with the universe is to have undergone the first four experiences of community.

A reading of the literature affirms the reality of the four-step community-making process:

1. Connect
2. Accept
3. Empower
4. Integrate

The sequential processes of community making are consistent with those described by Scott Peck (1987), author of The Different Drummer: Community Making and Peace, and Jacquelyn Small (1989), author of Becoming Naturally Therapeutic. From a state of chaos, Scott Peck implicitly identifies a three-step process a group takes in the transformation of group to a community— accept, empty, integrate. Alcoholics Anonymous uses 12 steps which can be further categorized into four broad categories of behaviors toward authenticity: (a) freeing one's self, (b) accepting and being in the here and now, (c) comprehending and living wisely, (d) having compassion and loving others.

What do ordinary people, outside of academic and research contexts, say community is? What is the essence of community? What makes community what it is and without which it could not be what it is (Manen, 1990, p. 10)?

According to the people engaged in "talking story," the essence of community is not proximal locality. The essence of community resides in people and their capacities to apprehend themselves as (a) being connected with others, (b) being worthy of acceptance and love, (c) becoming competent or having some sense of control of one's situation, (d) being interdependent with others and recognizing one's self as a unique individual, and (e) being a system in and of oneself yet also part of a larger holistic system.

What is community? People may have difficulty defining it because the one word is used to connote different states of mind in experiencing community. However, they have no difficulty knowing when they have it and when they don't.

> It is not without conflict or changes in its strength. . . . It is at its height when the existence of the referent group is challenged by external events, by a crisis like the air war over London in 1940, or a catastrophe like an earthquake; it is also at its height, for shorter periods, in times of celebration, during a political victory party or an Easter mass. It is one of the major bases for self-definition and the judging of external events. The psychological sense of community is not a mystery to the person who experiences it. It is a mystery to those who do not experience it but hunger for it. (Sarason, 1976, p. 157)

## Community and Learning

After examining the essence of community as experience, the researcher examined the relationship between the processes of community and the processes of learning. According to those who have studied higher levels of psychological development, the seeds of community making and the seeds of learning reside in the interactions between the human brain and environment(s).

Paul MacLean's Triune Brain Theory (1978) and Bruce Morton's Quadrimental Brain Theory (1985) propose that the evolutionary formations constitute a hierarchy of several brains in one. The major brain system consists of the reptilian system, the limbic system, and the left cortical hemisphere and right cortical hemisphere systems—see Table 2.

**Table 2**
**Multiple Brain Systems, Learning, Community-Making, and the Senses of Community**

| Brain Systems | Learning/ Thinking | Community Making | Community Senses | Self or System |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | HARMONY | |
| 4. Neocortex: Right Hemisphere | Synthetic Thinking<br>Holistic Thinking | Integrate | Oneness<br>Wisdom<br>Insight | Apprehending self in harmonic system |
| 3. Neocortex: Left Hemisphere | Analytical Thinking | Empower | Empowerment<br>Accomplishment<br>Competence | Proving the self |
| 2. Limbic | Emoting<br>Reinforcement Thinking | Make meaning<br>Love<br>Accept | Meaning<br>Value<br>Belonging | Seeking approval of self |
| 1. Reptilian | Storing a Data Base<br>Alerting<br>Triggering behavior<br>Autonomic<br>Automatic<br>Scripted<br>Reactive Thinking | Connect | Connection | Defending the self |

An analysis of the function of each brain system reveals that the hierarchical processes of learning and the hierarchical processes of community making are intertwined.

Each brain system is associated with specialized functions.

1. The reptilian brain is associated with automatic functions and scripted reactions to help a person meet basic survival needs. Gregory Bateson (1972) calls this "Zero Learning" (pp. 301-306) or reactive learning. When human beings are struggling to survive, we often fall back on our automatic behaviors or our scripted reactive patterns of learning.

2. The limbic system generates emotions—feelings of rejection and belonging. These feelings also play a key role in our "learning" to adapt to our environment by likes and dislikes (reinforcement learning theory). Gregory Bateson calls this type of learning, "Learning One" (pp. 301-306).

3. The left cortical hemisphere is responsible for thinking which is abstract, symbolic, analytical, and verbal.

4. The right cortical hemisphere is responsible for holistic thinking. It has the capacity to think metaphorically and to see the overall system or oneness. It can make contextual shifts. Both left and right hemispheres interact resulting in a sense of community commonly understood as a sense of victory, celebration, or mastery over a problematic situation. David Kolb calls these two types of learning, comprehension and apprehension. Gregory Bateson calls this type of learning, "Learning Two" (pp. 301-306).

Beyond the scope of this paper is Bruce Morton's more recent Pentamental Brain theory which includes the discovery of yet another brain system which is associated with a sense of experience of unity. This sense of community could be called harmony. Gregory Bateson (1972) calls this process, "Learning Three" (pp. 301-306). It is a way of looking at the world and one's self in a holistic fashion of relatedness. The syllogism of Gregory Bateson is one way of expressing this idea.

> Grass dies.
> Men die.
> Men are grass. (Kobayashi, 1984, p. 1)

Fundamentally the processes of community making are the processes of learning. Once we see the connection between the processes of learning and the processes of community, we can consciously energize and realize what Kohn (1990) identifies as the "brighter side of human nature."

## Community and Human Potential Development

To the extent that people fail in creating harmonic relationships with self, others, and environment, our human development is likely to be arrested. This is because the various senses of community are tied to the various modes of learning and community making, and these modes are key to the mastery of the various situations of our lives in the development of our human potential—see Table 3.

**Table 3**
**A Community Model of Human Potential Development**

| Phases of Development | Polarities: The Processes of Alienation and Community | Attitudes | Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5. Unity with All | Resist ---------- Flow | Harmony* | Unity |
| 4. Community with Others | Fragment ---------- Integrate | Oneness* | Integrity |
| 3. Differentation of Self | Control ---------- Empower | Nothingness* | Self Competence & Esteem |
| 2. Approval of Self | Devalue ---------- Value<br>Reject ---------- Accept | Isness* | Self Value & Acceptance |
| 1. Survival of Self | Isolate ---------- Connect<br>Ignoring ---------- Attend | Nowness* | Self Preservation |

*(Yamamoto, "NINO Model")

If each situation is approached with the most basic mode of learning and community making, people will not get very far in their development. Two modes of learning and community making, rather than one, will give people more choice and help in their growth; three or four is even better.

Based upon the observation conducted for this research, the researcher believes there are five phases of human development: (a) self-survival, (b) self-approval, (c) self-individuation, (d) community with others, (e) unity with all. To transcend each phase, one energizes the community side of the alienation and community-making continuum: (a) connecting, (b) valuing, rejecting-accepting, (c) empowering, (d) integrating, (e) flowing.

The processes are facilitated by attitudes articulated by Kenneth Yamamoto (1978) as (a) nowness, (b) isness, (c) nothingness, (d) oneness, and (e) harmony. Nowness means being present so that one may attend to or connect with another person. Isness conveys a passive nonjudgmental state of mind, a precursor to the act of acceptance. Nothingness is an Asian expression for a state of humility and emptiness so that one can see anew and learn. Oneness connotes a state of wonder, appreciation for the whole, wisdom.

The effects of these attitudes and processes are: (a) self-preservation, (b) self-acceptance, (c) self-competence and esteem, (d) integrity and wisdom, and (e) unity.

Not everyone experiences all phases of development. Many never have the opportunity to go beyond the first phase. Some vacillate between phases one and two seeking acceptance and meaning in dependent relationships and unconsciously keeping themselves from experiencing empowerment and high esteem. Still others are entrapped at a higher maturity stage vacillating between phases three and four and getting a glimpse of community of the highest kind only too rarely. Lastly there are a few who see and appreciate natural systems larger than ourselves. They are in awe at the revelation and are immediately humbled. There is the acceptance of how very little we know. There is no ego. There is instead a sense of universal oneness. They are free of fear and live lives of unity.

Different theorists account for the progressive series of changes that human beings undergo toward the condition called "humanness." They include Carl



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Jung (1971), Abraham Maslow (1980), Erik Erickson (1963), Martin Buber (1970), Jane Loevinger (1976), and Stephen Covey (1989). The number of steps or stages is not as relevant as the fact that most theorists recognize the gradient of human development from self-preservation to self-approval to self-individuation to community to unity or harmony with all.

## Community Education Reconceptualized

The most important criterion by which to judge any social program or social action process is whether it has produced or sustained a more positive psychological sense of community among its participants (Sarason, 1976, p. 155). Just as important is a stronger sense of interdependence with the larger whole toward higher levels of human development.

Community Education must be redefined as "education for community." Taking the liberty of incorporating Lawrence Cremin's (1976) definition of community, Community Education could be defined as the deliberate and sustained effort to facilitate, transmit, evoke, or acquire the knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and sensibilities of community and learning at increasingly higher levels. David Clark (1987) expresses it well:

> The art of community education is to provide those involved with a rich and varied experience of the interhuman in a way which can widen horizons and increase openness to new opportunities. This means as deep an understanding as possible of community making as a developmental process, both personally and socially. Thus if there are . . . stages of communal maturity through which societies themselves move, then awareness of these should be a matter of concern for the community educator. The task involves constantly searching for and providing practical examples of ecumenicity and autonomy which enable the learner to grow in understanding and appreciation of what community is all about. (p. 63)

Community Education should be the essential underlying curriculum or overall metacurriculum of all programs that have at heart relationships, learning, and human development.

## Basics of Education for Community

The first objective of Community Education is to connect people with each other and other things. The second objective is to validate all people. Whether the individual or group is rich or poor, loving or argumentative, enthused or apathetic, an effective community educator accepts people as they are and validates their "truth."

A Washington, D.C. agency seeking to provide a high-risk population with prenatal care, for example, reports that unless it responds to the needs that

> the pregnant women themselves consider more immediate—like housing—then "you just can't get them to pay attention to prenatal care." (Schorr, 1989, p. 257)

A community educator knows that concrete help or emotional support may have to be provided before any information on anything else can be received.

A third objective is to help people in their search for meaning. A community educator encounters people and sees their potential; he not only connects people with their work or deed but also with themselves. At appropriate times, he leads one to see meaning in all experience—even in suffering (Frankl, 1984).

> It is neither teaching nor preaching. It is as far removed from logical reasoning as it is from moral exhortation. To put it figuratively, the role played by the logotherapist is that of an eye specialist rather than that of a painter. A painter tries to convey to us a picture of the world as he sees it; an ophthalmologist tries to enable us to see the world as it really is. (Frankl, 1984, p. 115)

A fourth objective has to do with the higher levels of learning and empowerment—increasing knowledge, gaining skill, and opening doors to new ways of seeing. This knowing and appreciation does not come about through detached intellectualism. People must be consciously involved and self-reflective of the processes of community making in their own situations. They must know firsthand what responses and perceptions bring and keep people together and what causes relationships to divide and break apart.

An effective community educator is a "dialogical man" (Freire, 1972, p. 79). The dialogical man has a profound love for the world and man.

> Dialogue cannot exist without humility. The naming of the world, through which men constantly re-create that world, cannot be an act of arrogance. . . Dialogue further requires an intense faith in man. . . . Faith in man is an a priori requirement for dialogue; the 'dialogical man' believes in other men even before he meets them face to face. His faith, however, is not naive. The dialogical man' is critical and knows that although it is within the power of men to create and transform, in a concrete situation of alienation men may be impaired in the use of that power. Far from destroying his faith in man, however, this possibility strikes him as a challenge to which he must respond. . . . Nor yet can dialogue exist without hope. . . . Finally, true dialogue cannot exist unless the dialogues engage in critical thinking. (Freire, 1972, pp. 76-81)

The community educator is a model learner. Community educators know what community is at each level, and share their feelings and perceptions. Community educators are self-reflectors and become more and more articulate in helping others learn how to learn from their own experiences because they, too, have experienced the processes themselves.

The fifth objective of Community Education is to widen and deepen the contextual field of the individual or group so that the whole spectrum of potential meaning becomes conscious and visible to him or the group (Frankl, 1984). Community Education as basic curriculum or metacurriculum must facilitate deeper and wider experiences of relatedness in love, meaning, learning, and oneness.

## The Fundamental Role of Community Educators

The fundamental role of community educators is to mirror the essence of community in policies, programs, and practices that have some claim on the realization of wellness, learning, and human development. Gregory Bateson (1979), anthropologist, teacher, psychologist, and biologist, says it this way.

### Connect

Create the story that connects. Find the pattern that connects.

> Why do schools teach almost nothing of the pattern which connects? . . . What pattern connects the crab to the lobster . . . and them . . . to me to you? What is the pattern which connects all living creatures? (p. 8)

### Accept, Love, Value

> You could say that love is a rather difficult-to-define concept, related to . . . systems. At least a part of what we mean by the word could be covered by saying that 'I love X' could be spelled out as 'I regard myself as a system, whatever that might mean, and I accept with positive valuation the fact that I am one, preferring to be one rather than fall to pieces and die; and I regard the person whom I love as systemic; and I regard my system with some degree of conformability within itself. . . . I'm very willing to love animals, ships, and all sorts of quite inappropriate objects. Even, I suppose, a computer, if I had the care of one, because care and maintenance are in this picture too.' (p. 62)

Love and see beyond things, self, clique, family, neighborhood, state, nation and human species.

### Think

See and mind the world as it really is, a system of interdependent parts.

> We have been trained to think of patterns, with the exception of music, as fixed affairs. It's easier and lazier that way, but, of course, all nonsense. The truth is that the right way to begin to think about the pattern which connects

> is to think of it as primarily (whatever that means) a dance of interacting parts, and only secondarily pegged down by various sorts of physical limits and by the limits which organisms impose.
> (p. 13)

"To see, we must stop being in the middle of the picture" (Small, 1989, p. 85). The more we see the world as a system, the wiser we become.

> Wisdom I take to be the knowledge of the larger interactive system—that system which, if disturbed, is likely to generate exponential curves of change. . . . Love can survive only if wisdom (i.e., a sense of recognition for the fact of circuitry) has an effective voice since 'unaided consciousness must always tend toward hate.' (Bateson, 1977, p. 68)

**Synthesize**

> We can desire to become a part of something larger than ourselves because we know, in spite of the illusions of consciousness and the package of skin in which we can move, that there is a sense in which this is how things really are. In love we encounter this as emotion; wisdom argues further—this is not the special experience of passion or dedication or self-sacrifice, this is how the world is made. Wisdom argues for love by acknowledging the kind of world in which that kind of love is the most basic experience.
>
> Wisdom, however, differs from love in that in love our computations of relationship can remain unconsciousness, resonating into consciousness only as emotions. Wisdom demands not only a recognition of the fact of circuitry, but a conscious recognition, rooted in both intellectual and emotional experience, synthesizing the two. (Bateson, 1977, pp. 68-69)

Community is here for us to discover and approach. Community is a "vast collaboration, a dance of co-parenting by air and water and sun and moon; by bacteria and plants and other living creatures; by other people" (Bateson, 1980, p. 69).

## A Community Education Model and the Parent-Community Networking Centers

Critical to creating and developing a learning community is the idea that it is important for human beings to connect with each other, to be loved and to love, to learn and to share, and to be in harmony with the world. These dual needs-and-capacities remain with us throughout our lives. The realization of these inborn capacities are basic to higher levels of learning, and personal/group development.

Human beings face five generic problems which can be seen as challenges to our development as caring persons in a learning community. They are isolation, meaninglessness, powerlessness, fragmentation and estrangement. We experience them in a myriad of situations and relationships; for example, in mastering a new skill, developing a friendship, parenting, learning to read, or communicating in a family or work place. When we respond to these problematic situations through the "ways of community," we become humble, we learn, and grow in wisdom and harmony with each other.

The 200 Parent-Community Networking Centers are located on school campuses. Their mission is to create the higher senses of community among people at home, school, and neighborhood and, simultaneously, help people realize their learning capacities.

While each Center is different in terms of activities, there is a unifying theme—a conscious and deliberate effort to include the "ways of community" in all of its programs and activities. (A brochure explaining the application of the Community Education model to the Parent-Community Networking Centers program in Hawaii is available from the Office of Instructional Services/Community and Special Education Branch, Department of Education, P.O Box 2360, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804).

The challenge "is not to resist community." Rather, the challenge is to consciously energize and realize what is already inside of each of us—the capacities to create community at higher levels and "to be the wiser thereby."

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| THE SITUATION<br>ALIENATION | COMMUNITY<br>GROUP DEVELOPMENT |
|---|---|
| **ISOLATION**<br>Exclusion<br>Rejection<br>Distrust<br>Separation of people from resources and services | **CONNECTING**<br>Including people<br>Paying attention to people<br>Building trust among people<br>Linking with others |
| **MEANINGLESSNESS**<br>Authoritarian top-down assessment, plans and programs<br>Apathy<br>Non-involvement<br>Confusion<br>Irrelevance<br>Unawareness | **ACCEPTING/CREATING MEANING, LOVING**<br>Collaboratively assessing concerns, needs, and resources<br>Setting group goals<br>Involving others<br>Planning<br>Creating good memories<br>Expanding awareness |
| **POWERLESSNESS**<br>No access to information<br>Perception of no options<br>No choice<br>Lack of control over events<br>Irresponsibility<br>Group/self rejection | **EMPOWERING: LEARNING, SHARING GIVING CHOICE**<br>Giving/receiving information<br>Developing and seeing options<br>Sharing responsibility<br>Problem-solving as a group<br>Facilitating group competence<br>Modeling<br>Having group esteem |
| **FRAGMENTATION**<br>Divisions<br>Independence<br>Arrogance | **INTEGRATING INDIVIDUALS IN GROUP, LARGER SYSTEM**<br>Exchanging resources and services<br>Facilitating interdependence<br>Nurturing group integrity<br>Being a system |
| **ESTRANGEMENT** | **COMMUNITY/HARMONY** |

| EDUCATION | PARENT-COMMUNITY NETWORKING CENTERS | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| + PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT | + RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT | → PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES | OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS |
| **CONNECTING**<br>Being in the present<br>Accepting /giving attention<br>Risking trust<br>Reaching out | **CONNECTING**<br>Including, inviting, welcoming, visiting<br>Accepting self, teachers, families, students, and community<br>Building trust<br>Linking self with others<br>Connecting people with resources | Connecting with others through home visitations, newsletters, fliers, drop-in center, telephone tree, public relations, orientation sessions, fairs, resource directory, open house, clothing and food centers, hot line | Increased number of people frequenting the center<br>Increased number of people requesting services or help<br>Greater communication between home and school |
| **ACCEPTING/CREATING MEANING, LOVING**<br>Accepting self and others<br>Listening with empathy<br>Self reflecting on meaning<br>Involving self<br>Visualizing<br>Creating good memories<br>Expanding awareness | **ACCEPTING/CREATING MEANING, LOVING**<br>Grassroots assessing of school/community needs<br>Visualizing self and school/community development<br>Involving parents and community in education<br>Creating and planning relevant programs | Assessing needs, interests, and concerns: surveys, questionnaires, informal interviews, question generating activities<br>Creating mission statements and plans<br>Brainstorming, group problem-solving<br>Involving volunteers and parents in the classroom and the school<br>Appreciating people: thank you lunches, documenting events, video-taping | Increased number of people participating in collaborative community assessment<br>Increased awareness of self and others<br>Increased number of parents as volunteers<br>Positive attitudes |
| **EMPOWERING: LEARNING, SHARING GIVING CHOICE**<br>Sharing "seed thoughts," skills<br>Seeing and creating options<br>Being responsible<br>Problem-solving, self-reflecting<br>Becoming competent<br>Modeling<br>Having self-esteem | **EMPOWERING: LEARNING, SHARING GIVING CHOICE**<br>Sharing seed thoughts and learning<br>Providing for the exchange of information among parents, teachers, community<br>Developing options and choices<br>Developing a collaborative school/community problem-solving process<br>Developing school/community esteem | Providing workshops: early childhood, understanding teens, self esteem, communicating, homework, parenting, reading clinics, financial aid for higher education, college preparation, motivating your child, drug abuse<br>Problem-solving in councils, ad hoc groups, steering committees | Increased involvement of parents as partners in education<br>Improved home-school relationships<br>Increased number of parents as learners and teachers in the school setting<br>Increased number of teachers participating in the PCNC program<br>Achievement in areas defined by PCNC<br>Esteem |
| **INTEGRATING SELF WITHIN AND WITH OTHERS**<br>Exchanging resources and services<br>Appreciating interdependence<br>Having integrity<br>Experiencing oneness | **INTEGRATING CARING SUPPORT NETWORKS**<br>Developing personal support exchange systems for students, teachers, parents<br>Bonding, creating a sense of wonder<br>Integrating appropriate community resources into the school support network<br>Being interdependent | Referring persons to service providers<br>Facilitating interagency collaboration<br>Creating partnerships with businesses, agencies, parent groups, Community Schools for Adults, School to Work Transition Centers, Hawaii Community Education Association<br>Organizing personal support networks for children and parents<br>Creating teacher/parent resource rooms | Increased number of educational partnerships with other agencies<br>A sense of appreciation for the whole<br>School/community pride<br>A sense of family and community |
| **COMMUNITY/HARMONY** | **COMMUNITY/HARMONY** | **COMMUNITY/HARMONY** | **COMMUNITY/HARMONY** |

*The community education model is from Yamamoto, Kenneth and Ing, Vivian, "A Community Approach to Education," paper, c1988, and is also described in Ing, Vivian, "Hawaii's Parent-Community Networking Experience: Discovering Community and Community Education," dissertation, University of Hawaii, May 1992.*